

ECUMENICAL PRESS SERVICE

Published under the auspices of the : World Council of Churches · International Missionary Council
World Alliance of Young Men's Christian Associations · World Young Women's Christian Association
World's Student Christian Federation · World Council of Christian Education · United Bible Societies

EDITORIAL OFFICE · 17 ROUTE DE MALAGNOU · GENEVA · SWITZERLAND
TEL. 36 71 30 · CABLES OIKOUMENE U.S. ENQUIRIES : WCC, 475, RIVERSIDE DRIVE, NEW YORK 27: TEL. RIVERSIDE 9-4887

No. 29/28th Year



28th July, 1961

On Other Pages

Pope John's Encyclical Stirs Worldwide Comment	2
80,000 Attend Final Kirchentag Assembly in Berlin	3
YMCA Sees New Approach to Youth As Urgent	4
Polish Laws Curb Religious Teaching	5
CCIA Director Attacked in Hungarian Church Periodical	6
Britain Acts on Portuguese Detainment of Missionary	7
In Brief	7
Special Report	9

Churches Plan to Rebuild Homes Wrecked in Korea Flood Disaster

(Geneva) - The World Council of Churches' Division of Inter-Church Aid and Service to Refugees has raised \$8,000 of a \$10,000 fund sought to help Korea Church World Service subsidize the rebuilding of homes wrecked in the country's recent flood disasters.

The bursting of a dam at Nam Won, 150 miles south of Seoul, Korea's capital, following severe rainstorms, led to the deaths of 120 persons and brought havoc to the community of many thousands of persons. Some distance away a reservoir also burst and the flooding made 4,000 homeless. It is estimated that floods brought about by the storms have done \$2,000,000 worth of damage throughout Korea.

Mr. Colin Morrison, who heads Korea Church World Service, immediately cabled for help to the Division in Geneva. He said that with nearly 20,000 people homeless, and with 200 dead or missing, the situation was likely to grow worse.

"Although a National Flood Disaster Committee has been formed, Korea Church World Service would welcome gifts of money to subsidise home rebuilding", Mr. Morrison said. He appealed for \$10,000.

His request was sent at once to Inter-Church Aid Committees in ten different countries. Already, New Zealand, the United Kingdom, the Netherlands, Sweden, Germany, Denmark, Norway and Church World Service in the USA have responded by sending \$1,000 each.

The churches' plans to subsidise home rebuilding will augment the material aid which the Red Cross is distributing in the stricken areas. Crippled by its long war and torn by internal political troubles, Korea is one of the poorest countries in the world and least able to recover unaided from a major natural disaster.

EPS, Geneva

Religious Groups Back US Aid Proposal

(Geneva) - A United States proposal to use volunteer workers, including members of the Peace Corps, in United Nations technical assistance programmes in underdeveloped countries has been "warmly welcomed" by representatives of two religious organizations.

Duncan Wood of the Friends (Quaker) World Committee for Consultation, told a committee of the UN's Economic and Social Council meeting here that the programme should be started on "a very modest scale", and that steps should be taken to ensure the advice and active cooperation of numerous voluntary agencies which have "already accumulated valuable experience in this field".

Miss Leone Herren, speaking on behalf of the World Federation of Catholic Youth, told the committee that the US proposal was "well suited to the generosity of the young people of the world who are more favoured on the economic and technical plane".

The US proposal was formally presented to the council by Philip M. Klutznick, US representative to ECOSOC, who anticipated opposition by saying it was "not a proposal designed to extend the political or economic influences of any country or of any national philosophy".

EPS, Geneva

Pope John's Encyclical Stirs Worldwide Comment

(Geneva) - Protestant, Eastern Orthodox and Jewish leaders - as well as secular newspapers - joined Roman Catholic thinkers in hailing Pope John XXIII's new encyclical on social and economic questions in an age of rapid change.

Archbishop Iakovos, Greek Orthodox Primate of North and South America, and a co-president of the World Council of Churches, said the document, entitled "Mater et Magistra" (Mother and Teacher), provides Christian nations "with a Christian Magna Carta of human rights, in sharp contrast with the fallacies Marxism promises to the slaves of the totalitarian régime".

Dr. Reinhold Niebuhr, retired vice-president and professor emeritus of Union Theological Seminary in New York, expressed the opinion that "the Catholic Church is ahead of America in (its views of) social legislation except on dogmatic things like birth control".

A Jewish leader, Dr. Harold H. Gordon, executive head of New York Board of Rabbis, commented that "the Pope's call to aid underdeveloped areas reflects man's eternal responsibility to his fellow men as recorded so well throughout our Bible".

Among Catholic commentators was Father John F. Cronin, S.J., assistant director of the Social Action Department of the National Catholic Welfare Conference (USA), who noted that by US standards "the document is extremely liberal".

"The Pope accepts a wide diversity of economic methods, provided only that the individual and the family retain their basic rights", he remarked.

Meanwhile, The New York Times, which published the entire 22,000-word document, commented editorially that it "presents a picture of the conflict in our time between the crude materialism of the Communists and the humane spirit of all great and enduring faiths".

Unita, Italian Communist Party organ, said the encyclical showed an effort to "take cognizance of new and essential facts that dominate today's reality; facts created by the victorious advance of the international workers' movement".

La Stampa of Turin, Italy, termed the social philosophy of the encyclical "enlightened conservatism". EPS, Geneva

80,000 Attend Final Kirchentag Assembly in Berlin

(Berlin) - More than 80,000 persons from all over Germany and abroad attended the closing assembly of the 10th biennial Kirchentag - or German Church Day Congress - held in Berlin's mammoth Olympic Stadium. Several thousand of these came from East Berlin and East Germany. According to reports, they encountered few difficulties in crossing the border.

The final assembly centred around the Kirchentag theme, "I am with you", and was announced by the peal of bells, while 3,000 trumpeters played the traditional Kirchentag call, "Christ is risen".

"This Kirchentag has been an all-German Kirchentag", said Dr. Kurt Scharf, president of the Synod of the Evangelical Church in Germany (EKD), in greeting the large gathering.

Observing that the assembly had attracted many participants from East Germany, Dr. Scharf emphasized that they had come as Christians with the sole desire to hear God, confess their common faith and take part in the Bible studies, study groups, cultural activities and services.

In his address, Dr. Reinold von Thadden-Trieglaff, the Kirchentag president, noted that the German people had often thoughtlessly repeated the slogan, "God with us", without giving Him a place in their lives. This fact, he said, is the major cause for the present division of Germany, which depicts "God's judgment on us ... for which we all share some responsibility".

Earlier, Dr. von Thadden-Trieglaff said the decision to hold the Kirchentag in Berlin was taken "in God's name" and was "not a defiant one" prompted by political motives. "Christians", he said, "must stand together in faith, even if they are forced to live and think in different worlds".

A study group on Jews and Christians, headed by Dr. Helmut Gollwitzer, issued a statement at the conclusion of its discussions branding all forms of hostility toward Jews as a form of godlessness which leads to self-extinction.

Insisting that "Jews and Christians are indissolubly united", the statement appealed to all Germans - and especially to parents, teachers and people with political responsibilities - to admit their own failure to the younger generation and to point out the causes of anti-semitism during the Nazi era.

The statement called for the dismissal of any German official who participated in "preparation and execution of anti-semitic persecution" during that period, and pointed out that the so-called "Jewish question" in Germany is primarily "a question of the future of the German people".

Professor C.G. Baeta of Ghana, president of the International Missionary Council, told a study group on the world-wide Church that, since no country can be described as Christian, "the idea of one part of the world evangelizing another will not bear scrutiny".

"Missions are not a movement from the haves to the have-nots, from the educated to the illiterate", he said. "They are a movement from the fellowship of faith all over the world to all who stand outside this fellowship, whoever and wherever they may be."

Several thousands attended a public ecumenical meeting, which adopted the theme: "Jesus Christ, the Light of the World - a Look at the Assembly in New Delhi".

Dr. C.I. Itty, associate secretary of the Youth Department of the World Council of Churches, told the gathering that the WCC's forthcoming Assembly will have great significance for both society and the churches in Asia. Viewing the division of the churches as a particular stumbling block in Asia, Dr. Itty said Christians on the continent had the task of becoming a creative minority and should identify themselves completely with the hopes and aspirations of their countries.

During the five-day assembly, open-air evangelistic services were held in several areas, and pastors visited hospitals, homes for the aged, and prisons. A Protestant Advisory Centre also was established to provide people with professional advice on personal problems.

The Kirchentag was attended by more than 1,000 visitors from more than 30 countries, the largest delegation coming from Austria. Among church leaders from the Near East and Africa were representatives of the Greek Orthodox Patriarchate of Jerusalem, and the Patriarchate of Ethiopia, as well as Bishop Stephano of North Tanganyika, and Bishop Harris of Liberia.

EPS, Geneva

YMCA Sees New Approach to Youth As Urgent

(Geneva) - The World Council of YMCAs has resolved to discover ways in which it can help skilled young people to give their services to the world in need, and to train youth in leadership not only in the YMCA but in society at large.

This decision was announced here at the close of the World Council's week-long conference, which brought together 350 delegates who represent 5,000,000 members in 80 countries.

Reports presented to the World Council from many parts of the world indicated that the movement is no longer operating a "building-based" programme, that its members are not only "young people at play" - but are now taking responsibility in nation-building, especially in new independent countries.

The World Council therefore resolved to intensify its efforts to stimulate and guide young people in their desire to work actively in the reconstruction of society.

Reaffirming its belief that discrimination based on race or colour is contrary to the will of God, the World Council admitted eight new national movements to membership in the World Alliance of YMCAs. They are Ghana, Rhodesia, Nyasaland, Kenya, Ethiopia, Lebanon, Hong Kong, and the Federation of YMCAs in the British Caribbean.

The World Council re-elected Dr. Charles D. Sherman, 43, minister of finance in Liberia, West Africa, as its president. It also named Frederik Franklin, 48, national secretary of the Swedish YMCA, as the new secretary general of the World Alliance. He will take office next year on the retirement of Dr. Paul M. Limbert of the United States, who has served in this post for 10 years.

Delegates were informed that 140 building projects had been planned or completed in recent years, for which 95,000,000 Swiss francs (US \$ 23,750,000) was already available. The World Council is also recommending 58 new extension projects in 32 countries.

Tribute to the YMCAs pioneer efforts on behalf of the ecumenical movement was made by Dr. W.A. Visser 't Hooft, general secretary of the World Council of Churches.

"Today we can speak of a general ecumenical mobilization of the whole Church", he said. "Now there is a special place for those with experience in working in the reality of local situations, and in that way the YMCA can still give tremendous help." EPS, Geneva

Polish Laws Curb Religious Teaching

(Warsaw) - Despite protests from Roman Catholic deputies, the Polish Sejm (Parliament) has passed an educational reform bill banning religious instruction in all state schools.

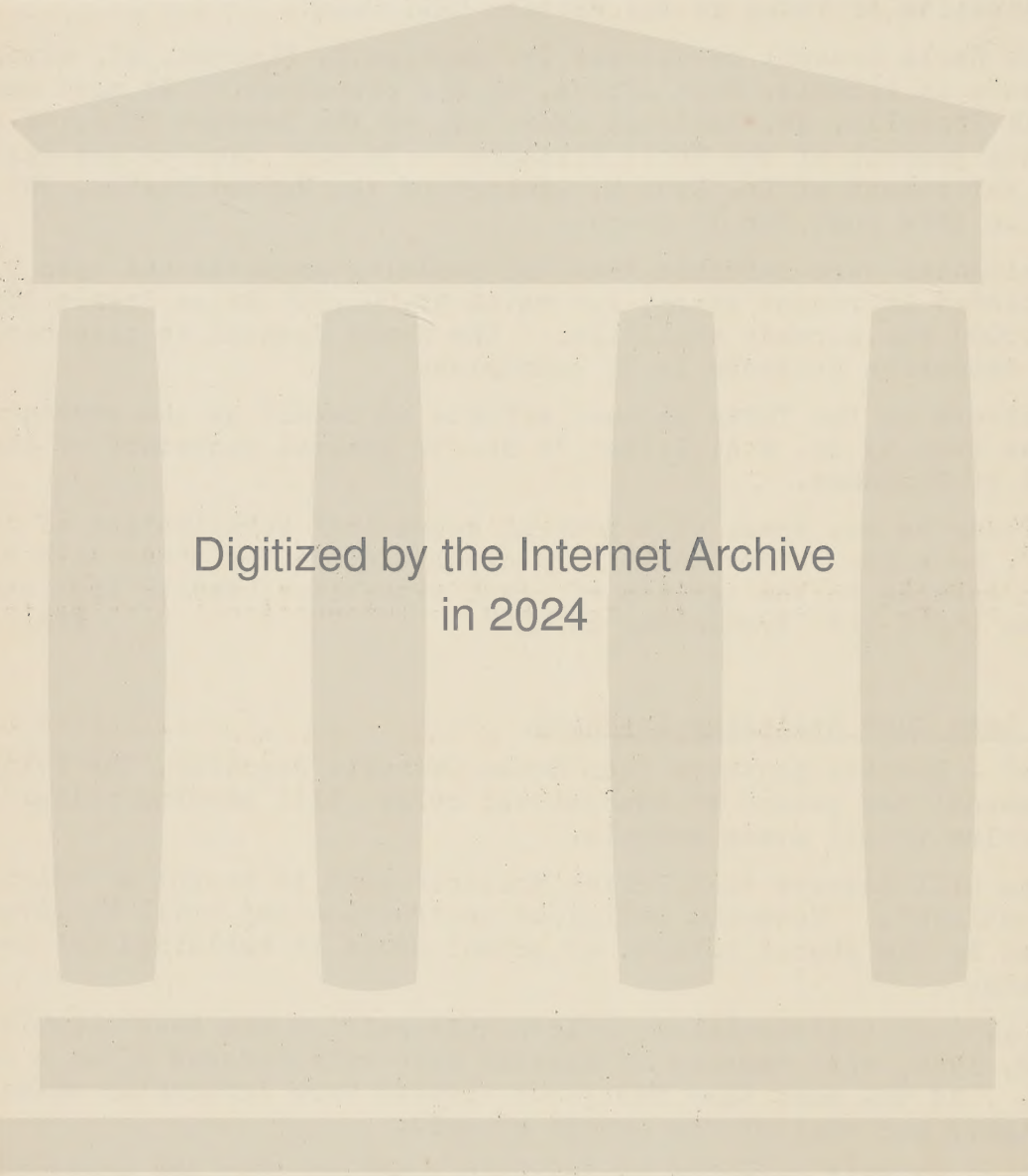
The bill decrees that Polish children must be taught a "scientific world outlook". However, religious instruction may still be given to students by the church outside of school hours in buildings not owned by the state.

Political instruction in Polish universities has been compulsory since October, 1960, when courses in Marxism were reintroduced after a four-year hiatus. At the same time religious classes were informally eliminated from eighty per cent of the public schools.

A second bill approved by the Sejm provides that the government receive title to all public properties, including the churches, in the western territories taken over from Germany after World War II. This law requires the Catholic Church to give up ownership of some 3,000 churches and parish buildings abandoned by German church bodies in 1945-1946. EPS, Geneva

Anglican Bishop Warns South Africa on Race Policy

(Capetown) - Reconciliation of the races in South Africa is a difficult task for the Church because it finds itself "moving diametrically opposite to the prevailing policy of the country" as it attempts to promote inter-racial fellowship.



Digitized by the Internet Archive
in 2024

This observation was made by Anglican Bishop John Hunter of George, Cape Province, who told a diocesan synod that the fundamental aim of the government was to keep the races "as far apart as possible".

Contending that authorities "want to reduce contact with different peoples to the barest minimum", Dr. Hunter declared that "never in the history of South Africa have the people been so deeply divided, nor has there been such a growing sense of frustration and bitterness felt by large sections of the population".

Dr. Hunter warned that no government can continue to govern indefinitely without the consent of the governed. He said the longer the government continues to force its will on large sections of the population without consulting their feelings or wishes, "the more terrible will be the menaces which eventually overtake it".

"It is not the task of the Church to act as a parliamentary opposition or to take the initiative in organized political action", he said. "But it is the Church's duty to protest against the manifest injustices, inhumanity and oppression as being directly opposed to God's law."

EPS, Geneva

CCIA Director Attacked in Hungarian Church Periodical

(Budapest) - A Hungarian Lutheran weekly newspaper has sharply criticized the director of the Commission of the Churches on International Affairs for opposing the Russian proposal for three-power control of nuclear bomb tests. The Commission of the Churches on International Affairs is a joint agency of the World Council of Churches and the International Missionary Council.

An unsigned article appearing in Evangelikus Elet criticized Dr. O. Frederick Nolde, the CCIA head, for statements he made on atomic armaments in a recent address before the Lutheran Ministerium of Pennsylvania. (See EPS No. 21)

Charging that Dr. Nolde was clinging to obsolete ideas for forgetting that the balance of power in the world had changed, the newspaper commented that Christians who accepted the spirit of the Prague Peace Conference were disturbed by the CCIA director's position.

"After the first Christian Peace Conference in Prague even Dr. Nolde must realize that the WCC is not the only forum where Christians can discuss the international problems of the day", it said.

Rather, it added, as time goes by it will be the Prague movement which will be the competent agency to deal with such discussions. "Everyone must accept the irrevocable fact that - in the light of the resolutions passed at the first Christian Peace Conference - we shall examine all statements made by the WCC through its organizations very critically", it concluded.

EPS, Geneva

Israeli Parliament Urged to Act Against Christian Missions

(Tel Aviv) - The Israeli Parliament has been urged to take legal measures against the activities of Christian missions in the country. The appeal was made by Rabbi Menachem Parusch, delegate of the ultra-Orthodox Agudat Israel Party, who contended that missionary activities were "a menace to the state".

Directing his criticism primarily against mission schools, Rabbi Parusch told Parliament that 1,485 children are attending Christian institutions.

The matter was referred to the education committee for examination on a motion of the Minister of Education. EPS, Geneva

Britain Acts on Portuguese Detainment of Missionary

(London) - Great Britain has requested the Portuguese Government either to charge and try without delay, or release, a veteran Protestant missionary who has been detained by authorities for questioning.

The request was made to Portuguese officials by the British ambassador in Lisbon on instructions from Foreign Secretary Lord Home after the detainment of Dr. Cecil Scott, a British subject and director of the Evangelical Missionary League.

Dr. Scott had for many years been in charge of the training of all Protestant missionaries of all nationalities, who were to serve in Portuguese overseas territories.

Meanwhile, the Baptist Missionary Society of Great Britain has strongly protested the occupation of a portion of the Society's property in San Salvador in Angola by Portuguese authorities who are using it for military purposes.

The Society was informed that the Portuguese army had commandeered about half the mission compound, including a new school, two residences, the station office, storehouses and workshops. Barbed wire separates the other four residences and the hospital from the military base.

Thus far, about 128,000 Angolan refugees have crossed the border into the Congo, according to the Rev. Michael Scott, director of the African Bureau, an independent British organization which concerns itself with African affairs. EPS, Geneva

In Brief

Dr. Jan Hermelink of Hamburg, executive secretary of the German Evangelical Mission Council, was fatally injured while driving to the Kirchentag in Berlin. The 37-year-old son of the well-known German church historian, Heinrich Hermelink, he was to have represented the German Missionary Society at the Third Assembly of the World Council of Churches in New Delhi next November.

* * *

Britons contributed more than £9,000,000 (\$25,200,000) during World Refugee Year, the campaign's United Kingdom Committee has disclosed. The figure represents more than four times the original goal. The sum raised by the 97 participating countries amounts to more than £33,000,000, and is expected to exceed £35,000,000 when all contributions are tallied.

* * *

The United Church of Christ in Japan and the Japan Bible Society have announced that they plan to ship 10,000 Bibles to Christians in Indonesia to relieve a critical shortage of the Scriptures in that country.

* * *

Filipino rural ministers and American agricultural missionaries mapped a long-range programme in agricultural missions for Philippine Protestant church bodies at a two-day conference in Manila. The conference was sponsored by the Agricultural Missions of New York, auxiliary organization for mission boards and other agencies in more than 55 countries, and the inter-denominational Philippine Federation of Christian Churches.

* * *

The Swedish government has approved the establishment of a Carmelite convent at Glumslöv, Scania, the first Roman Catholic convent in the country since the Reformation. However, in giving permission the government stipulated that only persons over 25 may take the vow and that the convent must not bar them from possible withdrawal. It also said that government authorities must be permitted to visit the convent and keep themselves informed of its activities and that they must be able to get in touch with individual members, if required.

* * *

A recent public opinion poll in Norway revealed that 72 per cent of the population are in favour of having women pastors, 16 per cent oppose the idea and 12 per cent are "indifferent". In a similar survey in 1946 the figures were 47 per cent in favour, 44 per cent against and 9 per cent "indifferent". It has been legal for several years for women to enter the ministry of the National Lutheran Church in Norway, but the first ordination took place just last March.

* * *

The bi-centenary of the birth of William Carey, renowned Baptist missionary to India, will be celebrated in Great Britain, Australia, Canada and the United States, as well as in the fields of the Baptist Missionary Society of Great Britain. More than 30 associations or districts have planned rallies in England in honour of Carey, who was born on August 17, 1761.

* * *

A Methodist clergyman, who has been working among the aborigines of Australia for 11 years, has informed a parliamentary committee in Canberra that he is convinced that "the aborigines are fully capable of taking their place in the church, industry and science". The Rev. A.H. Ellison added: "If given the chance, they will prove themselves worthy citizens". The committee is presently weighing demands for equal rights for aborigines and their full acceptance in Australian life.

* * *

The Methodist Church in the Northern Transvaal has adopted a resolution calling for the deletion from regulations of the church of all matter which is racially discriminatory in character. In the resolution, adopted at the first multi-racial church synod of the Methodist Church ever held in Pretoria the Methodists also reaffirmed their condemnation of South Africa's apartheid policies.

EPS, Geneva

Special ReportAfrican and European Farmers Discuss Kenya's Land Problems

(Nakuru) - In Kenya's Rift Valley, the agricultural power house of the country's economy, African and European farmers have met together to discuss the vital though vexing problems of land tenure and food production.

That in itself is remarkable. It is also historic, because the black and white representatives of Kenya's farming community were called together for the first time by the Christian Church.

The common standpoint from which farmers of both races were invited to view the present situation of political uncertainty and economic recession was Christianity and the stewardship of the land. The meeting took place at Nakuru on July 15 on the initiative of the Christian Council of Kenya.

Fifty farmers and church leaders, some from ranches 60 miles away and more, converged on the prosperous township of Nakuru for the meeting. Many Christian settlers prevented by distance or work from attending sent letters offering their support. The chairman was the Rt. Rev. Neville Langford-Smith, Bishop of Nakuru.

The Council's General Secretary, the Rev. Paul Fueter, told the Nakuru gathering: "We must recognize the hand of God in what is happening today - grave economic dangers because of crop failures. It is to draw us closer together that God has permitted these things to happen."

An African land-owner said: "We have nothing to fear if we use the land properly and unselfishly. The common enemy is famine."

The Rift Valley area encompasses the greater part of Kenya's farming industry which with its 200,000 workers is the country's biggest employer of labour, and responsible for some 80 per cent of the economy. Because the long rains have failed for the second successive year famine and unemployment are now regarded as inevitable and are expected to strike the Rift Valley in September or October. Already there are pockets of famine in the Valley.

At the conclusion of the Nakuru discussions, Mr. Fueter declared: "I believe the true future of Kenya can stem from the principles and ideas expressed at this historic meeting".

Said the Bishop of Nakuru: "We are a very small minority group but it is astonishing to see in history what small minorities have achieved under God". He summarized the views put forward by the meeting under four points:

1. The need for the Government to have a clear concern for good farming and maximum food production consistent with good farming;
2. The need for an over-all Government policy which would encourage and extend good farming by making available to African and European farmers increased capital loans and technical assistance;
3. The need for security of tenure without which it is not possible to farm properly. Past injustices had to be put right. Unless a legal title was also a moral title it was suspect: a man who deliberately let his farm run down, or who used land for speculation or exploitation, had no moral claim on it;

4. The resettlement of landless Africans on an agreed basis should have wholehearted support.

A successful European farmer who recently decided to double his acreage said that exploitation of the land was a negation of God's command to "subdue the earth and let her bring forth her increase".

A Kikuyu stated: "No thinking African wishes to dispossess a European of his well-farmed land and re-distribute it among Africans just because one man's face is white and another's black".

It is hoped that further meetings in other Rift Valley centres will enable the Christian farmers of both races to speak with one voice and to act as "the salt of the earth" in influencing the rest of the farming community and the Government.

EPS, Geneva